

## ANNEX C

### COMMUNICATIONS

#### A. PURPOSE

This annex describes the communications systems capabilities for the State Emergency Communications Center which will be used to meet two of the four basic communications requirements during an emergency disaster: (1) the direction and control of units engaged in emergency operations; and (2) the interchange of information between units of government. The other two communications requirements, warning and public information, are treated in the appropriate annexes: Annex B, Warning and Annex M, Public Information.

#### B. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

1. The Emergency Communications Center is part of the State Emergency Operations Center located in the State Capitol Building's East Wing basement. It is not continuously manned, but will be activated when needed to support the Emergency Operations Center.
2. The following systems and capabilities are present in the Emergency Communications Center for use during an emergency/disaster:
  - a. Federal Systems
    - (1) National Warning System (NAWAS) – A dedicated telephone line system providing intrastate, interstate, and federal-state communications capability between locations having “drops” on the system.
    - (2) Emergency Alert System (EAS) – A federally coordinated system using existing commercial radio, TV and cable stations to broadcast emergency information to the public. It may be activated by designated federal, state and local officials.
  - b. State Agency Systems
    - (1) Mobile Command Center (WVOES)
    - (2) National Guard
    - (3) State Police

NOTE: Equipment in the Emergency Communications Center provides access to each of these State-wide radio networks.

- c. Other Systems
  - (1) Commercial Telephone lines
  - (2) Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES)
- 3. The Office of Emergency Services will manage Emergency Communications Center operations. This will include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a. Coordinating the development of joint operational plans, procedures and checklists as may be required from all agencies, offices, departments, etc., occupying the Emergency Communications Center and/or providing communications support to the Emergency Communications Center.
  - b. Supervising and scheduling cross training of all operators on the various pieces of equipment located in the Emergency Communications Center. The training responsibility will be assigned to the various agencies who have agreed to supply communications equipment to the Emergency Communications Center.
  - c. The Emergency Communications Center is not solely dependent on public sources of power. There is an emergency generator capable of sustaining the Operating Center for a minimum of fourteen (14) days in the event of a power failure.
- 4. Each agency having a communications capability in the Emergency Communications Center will furnish operators during disasters, emergencies and tests as requested by the Office of Emergency Services. RACES operators for the Emergency Communications Center will be provided by the Kanawha Amateur Radio Club. Other operators will be assigned when requested by the Office of Emergency Services.
- 5. Commercial telephone lines will be the primary means of communications to and from the Emergency Operations Center. The primary back-up system will be RACES. The nets of the other state agencies will be kept as free as possible for their own use in coordinating the response of their personnel and equipment to the emergency/disaster.
- 6. If emergency radio communication is required from the disaster/emergency site, an Emergency Communications Team will be dispatched from the service area of the Air National Guard, Yeager Airport, Charleston. The team will be supplied with a radio and generator from the National Guard, and two operators, one of whom is technically qualified in the installation and maintenance of this equipment and to assure that 24-hour operation can be maintained. The team will be dispatched to the affected area by the fastest possible means: Army National Guard helicopter if weather permits, ground transportation, if it does not.

7. PL 93-288, Section 415 “Emergency Communications”, authorizes the Director, FEMA Region III, during or in anticipation of an emergency or major disaster to establish emergency communications and make them available to state and local government officials and other persons as he/she deems appropriate. Communications thus provided are intended to supplement but not replace normal communications that remain operable after a major disaster. Such emergency communications will be discontinued immediately after the essential emergency communications needs of the affected area have been met. The WV Office of Emergency Services is responsible for requesting assistance from the FEMA Region III Director, and to notify the Director when such assistance is no longer required.

#### C. TASK ASSIGNMENTS

##### 1. State

- a. The Office of Emergency Services will manage the Emergency Communications Center when activated. It will also coordinate preparedness planning, training and equipment maintenance.
- b. Other state and volunteer agencies as indicated above will support the Office of Emergency Services in providing emergency communications support to the Emergency Operations Center.

##### 2. Federal

The Regional Director, FEMA Region III, will act on State requests for emergency communications to supplement, but not replace, normal communications systems that remain operable during or in anticipation of an emergency or major disaster, and will discontinue such assistance when other emergency communications systems have been restored.

#### D. REFERENCES AND AUTHORITIES

1. West Virginia Code, Chapter 15, Article 5, as amended
2. PL 93-288, Section 415, as amended, “Emergency Communications”
3. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 44, Section 205.74d